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background notes

Poland

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Bureau of Public Affairs

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Official Name: Polish People's Republic

PROFILE

People

Nationality: *Noun*—Pole(s). *Adjective*—Polish. **Population** (1984): 37 million. **Annual growth rate:** 0.9%. **Ethnic groups:** Polish 98.7%, Ukrainian 0.6%, Byelorussian 0.5%, Jewish, less than 0.05%. **Religions:** Roman Catholic 95%, Eastern Orthodox 5%, Uniate, and Protestant. **Language:** Polish. **Education:** *Years compulsory*—8. *Attendance*—97%. *Literacy*—98%. **Health** (1984): *Infant mortality rate* (1984)—19.3/1,000. *Life expectancy* (1980)—71.6 yrs. **Work force:** 17.2 million. *Agriculture*—30%. *Industry and commerce*—44%. *Government*—8%. *Services*—11%.

Geography

Area: 312,612 sq. km. (about 120,700 sq. mi.); about the size of New Mexico. **Cities:** *Capital*—Warsaw (pop. 1,641,300). *Other cities*—Lodz (848,500), Krakow (735,100), Wroclaw (631,300), Poznan (570,900), Gdansk (464,600). **Terrain:** Flat plain, except mountains along southern border. **Climate:** Temperate.

Government

Type: Communist state. **Constitution:** July 22, 1952.

Branches: *Executive*—chief of state (chairman of the Council of State). *Legislative*—unicameral Parliament (*Sejm*). *Judicial*—Supreme Court, provincial and local courts.

Administrative subdivisions: 49 provinces (*voivodships*); 755 "large cities" governed by People's Councils of Provinces and Districts.

Political parties: The Polish United Workers (communist) Party (PZPR)—dominant party, which governs in a coalition, including the smaller United Peasants Party (ZSL) and the Democratic Party (SD). Small, quasi-independent parliamentary groupings—Christian Social Association, Polish Catholic Social Union, "Pax" Association.

Suffrage: Universal and compulsory over age 18.

Central government budget (1984): $23.3 billion.

Defense (1984): 7% of government budget.

National holiday: National Liberation Day, July 22.

Flag: Two equal-sized horizontal bands—upper white and lower red.

Economy

GNP (1984): $110 billion. **Annual growth rate** (1984): 3%. **Per capita income** (1984): $2,750. **Avg. inflation rate** (1984): 16%.

Natural resources: Coal, sulfur, copper, natural gas, silver.

Agriculture: *Products*—grains, sugarbeets, potatoes, hogs, other livestock.

Industry: *Types*—machine-building, iron and steel, extractive industries, chemicals, shipbuilding, food processing.

Trade (1982): *Exports*—$5.354 billion to communist countries; $5.828 billion to noncommunist countries. *Imports*—$5.972 billion from communist countries; $4.372 billion from noncommunist countries.

Official exchange rate (April 1985): 137 zlotys = US$1.

Fiscal year: Calendar year.

Membership in International Organizations

UN and several of its specialized and related agencies, except International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank; Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA), International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), International Lead and Zinc Study Group, Korea Truce Commission, Warsaw Pact.

The United States Government has not recognized the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. Names and boundary representation are not necessarily authoritative
Baltic Sea
Kaliningrad
Stupsk
Gdańsk
Elbląg
Suwałki
Koszalin
Olsztyn
Szczecin
Piła
Bydgoszcz
Toruń
Ostrołęka
Łomża
Białystok
Gorzów Wielkopolski
Ciechanów
Włocławek
Płock
Poznań
Warsaw (Warszawa)
Siedlce
U.S.S.R.
German Democratic Republic
Konin
Zielona Góra
Leszno
Skierniewice
Biała Podlaska
Kalisz
Sieradz
Łódź
Radom
Legnica
Piotrków Trybunalski
Chełm
Wrocław
Lublin
Jelenia Góra
Kielce
Zamość
Wałbrzych
Opole
Częstochowa
Tarnobrzeg
Katowice
Kraków
Tarnów
Rzeszów
Przemyśl
Bielsko-Biała
Nowy Sącz
Krosno
Czechoslovakia
Austria
Hungary
Poland
International boundary
National capital
Railroad
Road
International airport
0 25 50 75 100 Miles
0 25 50 75 100 Kilometers

PEOPLE

Among East European countries, Poland is second in area and population to the Soviet Union. The population of 37 million is approximately 98% Polish. Before World War II, the population included 4.5 million Ukrainians, 3 million Jews, 1 million Byelorussians, and 800,000 Germans. The majority of the Jews were killed during the German occupation of World War II. Most of the other minorities emigrated immediately after the war.

Most Poles are Roman Catholic. The remainder belong mainly to the Eastern Orthodox or Protestant religions.

Mazousze dance group

GEOGRAPHY

Poland is located in Eastern Europe in the same general latitude as southern Canada. It has natural boundaries only on the north (the Baltic Sea) and the south (the Carpathian Mountains along the border with Czechoslovakia). In an east-west direction, the country is part of a continuous plain that starts in Central Europe and continues to the Ural Mountains. The climate is temperate, with moderately severe winters, mild summers, and annual rainfall varying from 50 centimeters (20 in.) in most of the country to 122 centimeters (48 in.) in the mountains.

The postwar area of Poland is about 312,300 square kilometers (120,700 sq. mi.). The prewar, easternmost territories, comprising about 181,300 square kilometers (about 70,000 sq. mi.), were incorporated into the Soviet Union after World War II. As a result of the Potsdam Agreement in 1945, about 103,600 square kilometers (40,000 sq. mi.) of former German areas in the north and west were placed under Polish administration. These areas have since been incorporated into the Polish state. The Polish Government and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany signed a treaty in 1970 accepting existing frontiers.

HISTORY

Poland's name, "Polska," derives from the word "Polanie," or "plains people," one of several Slavic groups that settled the North European plain between the Oder and the Vistula Rivers and emerged as distinct groups in the first centuries before Christ. Roman Catholicism came officially to Poland in A.D. 966, when King Mieszko I adopted the religion for himself and the monarchy. The Kingdom of Poland reached its zenith with the Jagiellonian dynasty in the years following the union with Lithuania in 1386 and the subsequent defeat of the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald in 1410. The monarchy survived many upheavals until the final partition of Poland by Prussia, Russia, and Austria in 1795.

Independence for Poland was one of the 14 points enunciated by President Woodrow Wilson during World War I. Many Polish-Americans enlisted to further this aim, and the United States worked at the postwar conference to ensure its implementation. The United States established diplomatic relations with the newly formed Polish Republic in April 1919.

At the end of World War I, Poland reappeared as an independent state after more than 100 years of foreign rule. Parliamentary democracy lasted only from 1919 to 1926, when Marshal Jozef Pilsudski installed an authoritarian regime, which survived until after his death in 1935. In 1939, Poland again fell to foreign invaders; the attack by Nazi Germany marked the onset of World War II. Poland remained under either German or Soviet occupation until the end of the war but had a government in exile, first in Paris and later in London. The government-in-exile managed to negotiate with the Soviet authorities the organization and deployment in the West of an army of 110,000 Polish prisoners-of-war captured after the September 17, 1939 Soviet invasion of Poland. The number of Poles under arms reached about 600,000 during World War II—400,000 in an army formed in the Soviet Union and 200,000 fighting in units on western fronts.

The Soviet Union broke relations with the exiled Polish Government in April 1943 on the pretext that the Poles had insulted the U.S.S.R. by requesting that the Red Cross investigate mass graves of murdered Polish prisoners found by German military authorities at Katyn. On July 22, 1944, the Soviet Union installed a communist-controlled "Polish Committee of National Liberation" at Lublin, in the area of Poland that advancing Soviet armies had brought under their control. In January 1945, the U.S.S.R. recognized this committee as the Polish Government. Meanwhile, Polish underground elements staged an unsuccessful uprising against the Germans at Warsaw (August 1–October 2, 1944). After suppressing the uprising, the Germans evacuated the surviving population of Warsaw and then finished leveling the city in January 1945.

Following the Yalta Conference of early 1945, a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity was formed on June 28, 1945, and was recognized by the United States on July 5, 1945. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk was the principal noncommunist participant. Although the Yalta agreement called for free elections, those held on January 19, 1947, were controlled by the Communist Party. The communists then established a regime entirely under their domination.

In October 1956, after the 20th ("de-Stalinization") Soviet Party Congress at Moscow and the serious "bread and

'eedom" riots at Poznan, a shakeup in he communist regime returned Wladyslaw Gomulka to power as first secretary. Gomulka, a former head of the Polish Communist Party, had been ousted in 1948 and later imprisoned for refusing to support certain Stalinist policies. While retaining most traditional communist economic and social aims, the Gomulka regime liberalized Polish internal life until a reverse trend set in during the 1960s.

In December 1970, workers' discontent erupted into riots on Poland's Baltic coast. Disturbances and strikes in the port cities of Gdansk, Gdynia, and Szczecin, triggered by a price increase for essential consumer goods, were an expression of deep dissatisfaction with living and working conditions in the country. Gomulka was replaced as first secretary by Edward Gierek. As a longtime party leader of Katowice (Poland's most industrialized province) and a former miner, Gierek had a solid record of achievement in improving the lot of the workers. His assumption of top party office was a reassurance to the workers that their grievances would be heard, and his regime committed itself to raising living standards.

Gierek improved economic conditions by increasing real wages, easing food distribution problems, providing more and better consumer goods, and modernizing Polish industry, for which much of the equipment and technology came from the West. Fueled by large infusions of Western credit, Poland's economic growth rate was one of the world's highest in the first half of the 1970s. The growing debt burden became insupportable in the late 1970s, however, as recession in the West and inflation and market problems at home began to be felt. Economic growth slowed and actually became negative by 1979. These economic problems were compounded by shortfalls in meat production, persistent housing inadequacies, and a sharp rise in consumer expectations.

Popular discontent flared again on June 24, 1976, when greatly increased food prices were suddenly announced. Rioting took place in the industrial city of Radom; workers at the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw blocked the main railway for several hours; and shipyard workers in Gdansk went on strike. The price rises were rescinded the next day.

Perhaps the most significant result of the 1976 protests was the formation of the Workers' Defense Committee (*Komitet Obrony Robotnikow*—KOR). This group was established by intellectuals who wished to defend workers unjustly fired or imprisoned as a result of the 1976 strikes. Its most prominent leaders were Jacek Kuron and Adam Michnik, two dissident intellectuals.

In October 1978, the Bishop of Krakow, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, became Pope John Paul II, head of the Roman Catholic Church. The elevation of a Pole to the papacy electrified Polish Catholics. The Pope's visit to Poland in June 1979 caused an outpouring of emotion from enormous throngs, who turned out to greet "their" pontiff.

The Gierek government continued to try to stop the spiraling economic decline. More and more loans were secured from the West until, by the summer of 1980, the Polish foreign debt stood at more than $20 billion. The government made another attempt to increase meat prices in July 1980. This time, a chain reaction of strikes virtually paralyzed the Baltic coast by the end of August and, for the first time, closed down most of the coal mines in Silesia. Poland had entered the most extended crisis of its postwar history and a period of nearly revolutionary upheaval.

On August 31, 1980, striking workers led by Lech Walesa and a government negotiating team led by Vice Premier Mieczyslaw Jagielski signed a 21-point agreement at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, which ended the strike there. Similar agreements were signed at Szczecin and in Silesia. The key provision of all these agreements was the guarantee of workers' rights to form independent trade unions and the right to strike. Following the signing of the Gdansk Agreement, a new national union movement, "Solidarity," swept Poland.

The discontent underlying the strikes was intensified by revelations of widespread corruption and mismanagement among the Polish state and party leadership. At the sixth Central Committee Plenum of the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR) in September 1980, Gierek was ousted and replaced by Stanislaw Kania as first secretary. Other changes in party and state cadres continued during the succeeding months as the Kania program of *odnowa* (renewal) was proclaimed and attempts were made to overhaul the state and economic machinery in the midst of continuing worker unrest.

The rapid deterioration of the PZPR's authority in the months following the August agreement alarmed the Soviet party leadership and led to a massive buildup of Soviet forces along Poland's border during December 1980. The Polish party continued to assure its neighbors that it was in control, but statements issuing from Moscow, Prague, and East Berlin indicated doubts. In February 1981, Defense Minister Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski assumed the position of prime minister as well and called for a 3-month strike moratorium. The strikes continued sporadically, nonetheless, and in March 1981, a violent confrontation between the security police and Solidarity organizers in Bydgoszcz resulted in the first bloodshed since the beginning of the crisis. After repeated postponements, the party convened its Ninth Extraordinary Congress in July 1981, hoping finally to get ahead of the popular movement for reform represented by Solidarity. The Kania line of renewal was approved by the Congress, but the composition of the new, democratically elected Central Committee gave an equivocal outcome to the meeting, and the party's strength continued to ebb as membership declined.

The first national congress of Solidarity met in Gdansk in September and October 1981. Lech Walesa was elected national chairman of the union but only after being chastised by many

Polish Missions in the United States

Embassy Consular Annex

2224 Wyoming Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008
Tel. 202-234-3800

UN Mission

9 E. 66th Street
New York, N.Y. 10021
Tel. 212-744-2506 through 2510

Consulates

233 Madison Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10016
Tel. 212-889-8360

1530 North Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Ill. 60610
Tel. 312-337-8166

Commercial Counselor's Office

1 Dag Hammarskjold Plaza
885 Second Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10017
Tel. 212-486-3130, -3151, -3152, -3163

National Tourist Office (ORBIS)

500 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10110
Tel. 212-391-0844

of the local leaders for being too moderate. The union continued to push for far-reaching reforms in the Polish economic and political system. Finally, in October, Stanislaw Kania was replaced by Gen. Jaruzelski as party first secretary. The collapse of talks between party, union, and church leaders on a front of national understanding in November was followed by a call from Solidarity for democratic elections and a referendum on the party's continued leadership role in the state. On December 12–13, the regime responded with a declaration of martial law under which the army and special riot police were used to crush the union. The police took virtually all of the Solidarity leadership by surprise and arrested and detained them, together with many affiliated intellectuals.

The United States and its allies responded to this Soviet-inspired crackdown in Poland by imposing a series of economic sanctions against the Polish martial law regime and against the Soviet Union. On January 11, 1982, the NATO allies met in Brussels and issued a statement declaring that the sanctions would be lifted only if the Polish regime ended martial law, released all those interned, and started a dialogue with Solidarity and the church These conditions were reaffirmed at the NATO ministerial meeting in Luxembourg in May 1982.

In October 1982, the *Sejm* adopted a new trade union law abolishing Solidarity and all other pre-existing unions. In December, the government suspended martial law and released all remaining internees. However, a large number of political prisoners remained in Polish jails at the end of 1982, including 11 major leaders of Solidarity and KOR.

Underground opposition to the regime continued in 1983, and there were sporadic protests and demonstrations resulting in several violent confrontations with government security forces. In June 1983, Pope John Paul II returned to Poland for the second time. Once again massive numbers of Poles turned out to welcome and hear their spiritual leader and to express their commitment to the Catholic faith.

The government formally ended martial law in July, having incorporated several martial law statutes into the civil and penal codes, and enacted a general amnesty, which still left several hundred political prisoners in jail.

Solidarity leader Lech Walesa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in

Solidarity monument, Poznan

November and sent his wife to Oslo to accept the award, fearing that had he gone, he would not be permitted to return.

Early in 1984, the government began public consultations on food price increases and made preparations for local elections in June. Solidarity voiced its opposition to the price increases and called for a boycott of the elections.

In July, the government enacted another general amnesty to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Polish People's Republic. Under this amnesty, 630 political prisoners were released, including the best-known "Group of Eleven" leaders of Solidarity. By August 1985, new arrests had brought the number of political prisoners to over 250.

Sanctions imposed earlier by the United States and its allies were adjusted gradually in response to the release of prisoners, the formal lifting of martial law, and the amnesties in 1983 and 1984. Some sanctions remain in place, however, pending further evidence of the Polish Government's intention to conduct a meaningful dialogue leading toward authentic national reconciliation.

The kidnapping and murder of pro-Solidarity Father Jerzy Popieluszko by officers of the Polish security police in October shocked and angered the Polish people. Over half a million people attended Popieluszko's funeral in Warsaw, and his grave has become a popular shrine. The trial of the four security officers accused of the murder, although marred by the government's efforts to use it as a vehicle for anticlerical propaganda, was an unprecedented event in Poland. The four officers were found guilty and sentenced to lengthy prison terms.

GOVERNMENT

The government is controlled by the Polish Communist Party, the PZPR. Policy direction is furnished by the PZPR Politburo, headed by Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, first secretary of the party. The chief of state is Henryk Jablonski, chairman of the Council of State. The PZPR has about 2.2 million members.

The government structure, similar to that of the Soviet Union, is based on a constitution promulgated on July 22, 1952. The 460-member Parliament (*Sejm*—pronounced "same") is declared to be the supreme organ of state authority. Elections to the *Sejm* are scheduled to take place in October 1985.

The *Sejm* formally elects a 17-member Council of State that exercises certain legislative and executive functions. It also elects a Council of Ministers (Cabinet) that performs the principal executive functions and corresponds to the "government" as understood in West European parliamentary systems.

Judicial proceedings are carried out through a Supreme Court and provincial and local courts. All are subordinate to party policies and directives.

Principal Government Officials

Prime Minister and First Secretary of the PZPR—Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski
Minister of National Defense—Gen. Florian Siwicki
Chairman, Council of State—Henryk Jablonski
Minister of Foreign Affairs—Stefan Olszowski
Minister of Foreign Trade—Tadeusz Nestorowicz

Ambassador to the United States—Vacant
Ambassador to the United Nations—Vacant
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.—Zdzislaw Ludwiczak

Poland maintains an embassy in the United States at 2640 - 16th Street, NW., Washington, D.C. 20009 (tel. 202-234-3800, 3801, 3802).

POLITICAL CONDITIONS

The PZPR remains the dominant political force in Poland. Other political groups represented in the *Sejm* occasionally express divergent views but normally are unable to achieve significant changes in legislation proposed by the PZPR. The PZPR heads a coalition with the Peasants Party (ZSL) and the Democratic Party (SD) which controls about 400 of the 460 seats in the *Sejm*. There are a few independents and Catholic deputies.

Gains in the observance of human rights during 1980–81 were wiped out by martial law and have been only partially restored. Freedoms of press, association, and assembly, continue to be severely restricted, and state security organs have frequently used force against peaceful demonstrators. The number of political prisoners jailed since the July 1984 amnesty now totals over 250.

The government has not changed official policy on the reunification of families, and by April 1985, there were 414 unresolved cases involving 1,778 individuals. The government officially discourages emigration but issues large numbers of tourist passports to its citizens.

ECONOMY

The organization of Poland's economy is based on the Soviet model of state ownership of most of the country's productive assets. Although a private sector exists in trade and industry, it is a relatively insignificant factor in Poland's overall industrial production. Poland's economy, however, differs substantially from that of the Soviet Union due to the predominance of private sector agriculture. Although an attempt was made in the early 1950s to collectivize private farms, the government has since then accepted the private farm model, and in 1983 added a guarantee of the rights of this sector to the Polish constitution.

Agriculture

Seventy-five percent of Poland's agricultural production is derived from 2.8 million private farms, which average 5.5 hectares in size. Some 5,000 state farms produce the remaining 25%. The majority of private farms produce both livestock and crops. The agricultural sector is chronically unable to meet national demands for wheat, feedgrains, vegetable oils, and protein meals. Poland is the leading producer in Eastern Europe of potatoes, rapeseed, sugar beets, grains, hogs, and cattle. Growing popular demand for meats has led to increases in the size of livestock herds. Expansion of herds is constrained, however, by shortfalls in feed supplies. Attempts to increase domestic feedgrain production are hampered by the short growing season, poor soil, shortage of commercial fertilizers, and the small size of farms. The agricultural sector faces increasing dependence on imported feed supplies such as corn and protein meals.

Industry

Since World War II, Poland's industrial base has expanded beyond its prewar concentration in the coal, textile, chemical, machinery, iron, and steel sectors. It now includes such newly developed industries as fertilizers, petrochemicals, machine tools, electrical machinery, electronics, and shipbuilding. Despite these

new sectors, the emphasis of Poland's industries continues to be on raw material extraction, especially hard coal and copper.

Poland's industrial base suffered greatly during World War II, and much of the investments of the 1950s were directed toward reconstruction. The need to rebuild existing capacities and the very orthodox communist economic system imposed on Poland in the late 1940s resulted in the intense centralization of industries in which extremely large and unwieldly economic structures operated under detailed central command. In part because of this systemic rigidity with the emphasis on central planning, the economy has performed poorly even in comparison with other economies in Eastern Europe.

Foreign Trade

One of the reasons for the poor performance of the Polish economy has been low reliance on foreign trade. Prior to the Gierek regime in the 1970s, Poland had achieved one of the lowest levels of per capita foreign trade in Europe. As a consequence of these autarkic policies, Poland's industries failed to develop competitiveness and were ill-prepared in the 1970s to make use of the heavy influx of Western producer goods in a way that would permit successful exporting to the West. The policy of borrowing from the West in order to modernize Polish industry failed because of the lack of attention to the systemic faults of Poland's industries. Polish enterprises did not develop sufficient marketing expertise or the necessary flexibility to approach the difficult chore of selling to increasingly competitive Western markets. These factors, combined with recession in the West during the mid-1970s, doomed Poland's strategy of modernization through trade and credits. In 1985, Poland is faced with a crushing foreign debt of about $28 billion, while hard currency earnings (about $6 billion in 1984) have stagnated. Poland's debt service ratio (the measurement of hard currency earnings to hard currency debt servicing obligations) is one of the world's worst.

Poland's trade is divided roughly equally between hard currency markets and CEMA [Council for Economic Mutual Assistance] countries where the transferable ruble is the unit of currency. The lack of new credits caused by Poland's already huge indebtedness has forced some shift toward the soft currency zone where it can pay for much

Aerial view of Krakow's Old Town Square with a statue of Adam Mickiewicz in lower left

needed raw materials with manufactured goods it could not successfully sell in the West. So far, this shift in trade has not been as significant as expected, but the longer term prospects are for greater CEMA trade, unless Poland is able to solve its hard currency debt problems.

Consumer Supplies

The substantial decline in national income during the crisis period of 1980–82 was reflected in serious shortages on the consumer markets. Meat supplies plummeted forcing a return to rationing. Although there has been some improvement in food supplies in the period 1983–85, many items of everyday use are in critically short supply. Automobiles and apartments are especially difficult to buy, with long waiting periods required for both. The government has relieved some of the pressure on consumer markets by expanding the already extensive system of Pewex dollar stores where any Pole may purchase goods for hard currency. Although this system has relieved some of the pressure, it has also had the effect of increasing social tensions and in keeping the black market price for hard currency at four to five times the official rate.

Travel Notes

Entry requirements: All visitors to Poland must obtain a valid entry visa from a Polish consulate. They must submit the visa application with a passport valid 3 months beyond the expiration of the Polish visa, two passport-size photographs, an application fee ($16 in most cases), and a copy of a travel voucher or money exchange order obtainable only from a travel agent. Except in special cases, no immunizations are required. Regular tourists must exchange $15/day into Polish currency while in Poland.

Tourist attractions: Poland's major tourist attractions include the winter resort area of Zakopane, near the Czechoslovak border; the Wawel Castle, medieval Cloth Hall, and Mary's Church in Krakow; the coastal resort of Sopot; and the reconstructed portions of Gdansk and Szczecin (two Hanseatic cities) in the north. War relics are scattered throughout the country, from the magnificently restored Teutonic fortress of Malbork and many ducal castles to the ruins of Hitler's "Wolf's Lair." Favorite attractions in metropolitan Warsaw include Chopin's birthplace at Zelazowa Wola, Gen. Pulaski's birthplace and museum at Warka, the Wilanow and Lazienki palaces of the kings of Poland, and the painstakingly restored "Old Town."

FOREIGN RELATIONS

In all important aspects, Polish foreign policy follows the lead of the Soviet Union. Poland's relations with the Soviet Union are based on two treaties: a bilateral treaty of friendship, cooperation, and mutual aid of April 21, 1945, renewed in April 1965, and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (Warsaw Pact) a multilateral political-military organization including all the communist states of Eastern Europe except Yugoslavia and Albania. The Warsaw Pact treaty was renewed in April 1985 for a period of 20 years, with automatic renewal for a further 10 unless a member state specifically asks to withdraw. In addition, Poland is a member of CEMA, a Soviet bloc organization. Somewhat less than 60,000 Soviet troops are stationed in Poland under Polish-Soviet agreements. The Polish Army is the largest Warsaw Pact force after the Soviet Army, numbering 298,000 troops in 15 divisions.

Since 1956, Poland has been more active internationally. It is a member of the United Nations and all of its specialized agencies, including the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). It is not a member of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In 1984, the Polish Government announced its intention to withdraw from the UN International Labor Organization beginning in 1986.

U.S.-POLISH RELATIONS

After First Secretary Gomulka came to power in 1956, Poland appeared ready to follow policies of increased internal liberalization and greater autonomy in foreign affairs. Consequently, relations with the United States began to improve. It became possible to arrange for the reunion of a large number of divided families, to begin meaningful cultural contacts and economic programs, and to engage in more substantive contacts on international matters. However, in the period 1961–70, erosion of internal liberalization and reversion to a policy of full and unquestioning support for Soviet foreign policy objectives caused U.S.-Polish relations to stagnate. Strong Polish support for Soviet positions on the Middle East, Indochina, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia was accompanied by propaganda attacks on the United States and in 1968–69, anti-Semitic actions in Poland. The United States firmly protested these actions.

The atmosphere of U.S.-Polish relations improved significantly after Edward Gierek became first secretary and the new Polish leadership expressed its interest in improving relations with the United States. Exchanges of cabinet-level visits led to President Nixon's visit to Warsaw on May 31–June 1, 1972, when a consular convention was signed with Poland. Visits to the United States later that year by the Polish foreign minister and the minister of foreign trade led to the Polish Government's decision to settle the question of defaulted prewar bonds with American bondholders.

First Secretary Gierek visited the United States in October 1974 at the invitation of President Ford. This visit, the first by a Polish leader to this country, underlined the considerable progress made in U.S.-Polish relations during the preceding few years. The following important agreements were signed by U.S.-Polish cabinet-level officials:

- Joint funding of scientific and technology cooperation and establishment of a joint U.S.-Polish board to determine areas of research to be funded (this agreement lapsed on December 31, 1981, although previously approved research projects are continuing);
- Cooperation in coal research, with particular emphasis on coal utilization and extraction;
- An income tax convention, providing for nondiscriminatory tax treatment and for administrative cooperation;
- Cooperation in the field of health, establishing a joint committee to determine the mechanism and policy for the program under the agreement; and
- Formation of a U.S.-Polish economic council under the auspices of the U.S. and Polish Chambers of Commerce.

President Ford was warmly welcomed when he visited Warsaw and Krakow on July 28 and 29, 1975, on his way to Helsinki for the final session of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Although he and First Secretary Gierek signed no agreements, they issued a joint statement and communique. Both documents emphasized achievements made in bilateral relations and further improvements to which both sides were firmly committed.

President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance visited Poland December 29–31, 1977. The President held extensive talks with First Secretary Gierek and other Polish leaders, conducted an open press conference in Warsaw, and visited several points of interest.

The advent of Solidarity in August 1980 raised the hope that progress would be made in Poland's external relations as well as in its domestic development. Internally, there was an expectation that it might lead to greater openness and democracy, while externally, many looked for closer cooperation between Warsaw and the West. U.S. policy throughout the Solidarity period had two goals: to encourage greater respect for human rights and individual freedom, while at the same time carefully avoiding interference in Poland's internal affairs. Toward this end, for example, the U.S. Government provided a total of $765 million in agricultural assistance during 1981.

Unfortunately, the aspirations of the Polish people were not to be realized. The Polish Communist Party, together with the Soviets, became increasingly fearful and threatened by the emergence of a new force that they could not control and that promoted peaceful change by democratic means. In an effort to stop the movement toward greater openness and democracy, martial law was declared by the Polish authorities on December 13, 1981.

The U.S. Government had no choice but to react swiftly and decisively in the wake of the declaration of martial law. President Reagan was determined to show that the United States was not prepared to conduct "business as usual" in view of the Polish Government's declaration of war against its own people. As a result, the President:

- Suspended consideration of any new credits for Poland, including the $100 million that had just been approved;
- Suspended Polish civil aviation privileges in the United States;
- Revoked Polish fishing rights in U.S. waters;
- Allowed the Export-Import Bank's line of export credit insurance for Poland to lapse;
- Suspended delivery of the remaining unshipped amounts of government-to-government agricultural aid;
- Restricted the export of high technology to Poland; and
- Refused to negotiate rescheduling of Poland's official debt.

The U.S. Government also refused to support consideration of Poland's membership application in the IMF.

In October, the United States suspended most-favored-nation status for Poland in response to the Polish Government decision to delegalize Solidarity. In addition, the United States suspended scientific travel under the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Joint Fund after the U.S. Science Attaché was expelled from Poland in May 1982.

Since the imposition of sanctions, the United States has responded on a step-by-step basis to human rights improvements in Poland. The United States agreed to begin the process of negotiating Poland's hard currency foreign debt. In January 1984, in response to the release of a large number of political prisoners, the U.S. Government acted to restore Poland's fishing privileges in U.S. waters and to permit charter flights on a reciprocal basis. In August 1984, in response to the decision by Prime Minister Jaruzelski to declare a general amnesty which resulted in the release of most political prisoners held at that time, the United States decided to restore landing rights for regularly scheduled flights of the Polish airlines, LOT, and to seek resumption of full-scale scientific exchanges. Later in 1984, the United States decided to base its vote on a prospective IMF application on Poland's ability and will-

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These titles are provided as a general indication of material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

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For information on economic trends, commercial development, production, trade regulations, and tariff rates, contact the International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20230.

ingness to assume the obligations of membership. These measures notwithstanding, the bilateral relationship remains strained.

Principal U.S. Officials

Ambassador—Vacant
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.—John R. Davis, Jr.
Deputy Chief of Mission—David H. Swartz
Political Counselor—Patrick J. Flood
Economic Counselor—Hugh G. Hamilton
Press and Cultural Affairs Counselor—John P. Harrod
Consul General—David L. Boerigter
Principal Officer, Poznan—Mary Rose Brandt
Principal Officer, Krakow—Michael Metrinko

The U.S. Embassy in Poland is located at Aleje Ujazdowskie 29/31, Warsaw (tel. 283041-49). The Consulate at Poznan is at Ulica Chopina 4 (tel. 595-86, 595-87); at Krakow, Ulica Stolarska 9 (tel. 577-93, 597-64). ■

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